

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR"

# ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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## A CHARMING FELLOW.

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### CHAPTER V.

THE little group round Minnie's sofa dispersed as Mr. Diamond came forward. He was barely known by sight to most of them, and merely bowed gravely and shyly, without speaking.

"Who's that?" asked Colonel Whistler, in a loud whisper, of his eldest niece. "Eh? oh! ah! second master—yes, yes, yes; to be sure!" And the gallant gentleman walked off to the card-room, and joined the party at Mrs. Dockett's table, where there was a vacant place. It must be owned that the colonel's appearance was by no means rapturously hailed there. He was a notoriously bad player. Fate, however, allotted him as a partner to Mr. Warlock. Mrs. Dockett and Mr. Smith exchanged glances of satisfaction, and the gloom on Mr. Warlock's brow perceptibly deepened as the colonel, polite, smiling, and eager for the fray, took his seat opposite to that clerical victim.

"Algy, give Mr. Diamond your chair," said Miss Bodkin. It was in this imperious manner that she occasionally addressed her young friend. In her eyes he was still a school-boy. And then she was four years his senior, and had been a young woman grown when he was still playing marbles and munching toffy.

Algy by no means considered himself a school-boy, but he had excellent tact and temper. He rose directly, shook hands with his tutor, and then, standing opposite to Minnie, put his knuckles to his forehead, after the fashion in vogue amongst

rustic children by way of salute, and said meekly, "Yes'm, please'm."

Minnie laughed. "You don't mind, do you, Algernon?" she said, looking up at him.

"Not at all, Miss Bodkin. You have merely cast another blight over my young existence. I am growing to look like the reverend Peter, in consequence of your ill-usage. Don't you perceive a ghastly hue upon my brow? No? Ah, well, you would if you had any feeling. Here, let me put this cushion better for you. Will that do?"

"Capitally, thanks. And, look here, Algy; I can't bear any music to-night, so will you get mamma to set the McDougalls down to a round game? And play yourself, there's a good boy!"

"Oh, Minnie, you ought to have been Mrs. Nero. There never was such a tyrant. Well, Pawkins and I must make ourselves agreeable, I suppose. For England, home, and beauty—here goes!" And Algernon speedily had the two Miss McDougalls, and Mr. Pawkins, and Alethea Dockett engaged in a game of vingt-et-un—played in a very infantine manner by the first-named ladies, and with a good deal of business-like gravity by little Alethea, who liked to win.

Mr. Diamond looked at the group with his hand over his mouth after his habit.

"Isn't he a nice fellow?" asked Minnie, watching Mr. Diamond's face curiously.

"Errington?"

"Of course!"

"Very."

"But now, tell me—do sit down here; I want to talk to you. You come so seldom. I wonder why you came to-night?"

"I chanced to meet Mrs. Bodkin in the street, and she asked me so pressingly—she is so good!"

Minnie's face wore a pained look. "It is a pity mamma should have teased you," she said, in a low voice.

Matthew Diamond took no notice of the words. Perhaps he did not hear them. "I am not fit to go to evening parties," he continued. "The very wax-lights dazzle me. I feel like a bat or an owl."

"Too wise for your company, that means!"

"How can you say so? No: I assure you I was compared to an owl the other evening by a lady, and I felt the justice of the comparison."

"By a lady! What lady?"

Mr. Diamond smiled a little amused smile at the authoritative tone of the question. Minnie did not see it. She was leaning her elbow on a cushion, and had her face turned towards Mr. Diamond; but her eyes, which usually looked out, open and unabashed, were half veiled by their lids.

"The lady was Mrs. Errington," answered the tutor, after a moment's pause.

"She called you an owl? That eagle? Well, she has this aquiline quality; I believe she could stare the sun himself out of countenance!"

"You were asking me to tell you——" said Mr. Diamond.

"To tell me——? Oh, yes; about the Methodist preacher. That caricature is not like him, you say?"

"Not at all. It is a vulgar conception of the man."

"And the man is not vulgar? I am glad of that! Tell me about him."

Matthew Diamond had heard the preacher more than once. The first time had been by chance on Whit Meadow. The other times were in the crowded, close Wesleyan chapel, into which he had penetrated at the cost of a good deal of personal inconvenience, so greatly had Powell's eloquence impressed him.

"The man is like a flame of fire," he said. "It is wonderful! He must be like Garrick, according to the descriptions I have heard. And, then, this fellow is so handsome—wild and oriental-looking. I always long to clap a turban on his head, and a great flowing robe over his shoulders."

Minnie listened eagerly, with parted lips, to all that Diamond would tell her of the preacher.

"That is for his manner," she said, at length. "Now, as to the matter?"

Mr. Diamond paused. "The man is an

enthusiast, you know," he answered, gravely.

"But as to his doctrine? Give me some idea of the kind of thing he says."

"Not now."

"Yes; now. This moment!"

"Excuse me; I cannot enter into the subject now."

Minnie raises her brown eyes to his steel-grey ones, and then drops her own quickly.

"Will you ever?" she asks, meekly.

"Perhaps. I don't know."

Miss Bodkin is not accustomed to be answered with such unceremonious curt-ness; but, perhaps on account of its novelty, Mr. Diamond's blunt disregard of her requests (in that house Minnie's requests have the weight of commands) does not ruffle her. She bears it with the most perfect sweetness, and proceeds to discourse of other things.

"Don't you think it a pity," she says, "that Algernon Errington should have refused his cousin's offer?"

"A great pity—for him."

"Ah! you think Mr. Filthorpe of Bristol is not to be consoled with on the occasion?"

Mr. Diamond's firmly closed lips remain immovable.

Minnie looks at him wistfully, and then says suddenly, "Do you know I like Algy very much! There is something so bright and winning and gay about him! I have known him so long—ever since he came here as a small child in a frock. And papa knew his father, Dr. Errington. He was a very clever man, a brilliant talker, and greatly sought after in society. Algy inherits all that. And he has—what they say his father had not—a temper that is almost perfect, thoroughly sound and sweet. I wish you liked him."

"Who tells you that I do not like him? You are mistaken in fancying so. I think Errington one of the most winning fellows I ever knew in my life."

"Y-yes; but you don't think so well of him as I do."

"Perhaps that is hardly to be expected! And pardon me, Miss Bodkin, but you don't know——"

"I know nothing about your thoughts on the subject!" interrupts Minnie quickly, and with a bright, mischievous glance. "Forgive my interrupting you; but when I am to have a cold shower-bath, I like to pull the string myself. Now it's over."

"You think me a terrible bear," says

Diamond, looking down on her beautiful, animated face.

"Ah! take care. If I know nothing about your thoughts, how do you pretend to guess mine? Besides, I am not so zoological in my choice of epithets as your friend, Mrs. Errington. Papa nearly quarrelled with that lady on the subject of Algy's going away. But, you know, it is not all Mrs. Errington's fault. Algy chooses to try his fortune under the auspices of Lord Seely—I can see that plainly enough. And what Algy chooses his mother chooses. He has been terribly spoiled."

"It is a great misfortune——"

"To be spoiled?"

"For him to have lost his father when he was a child. Otherwise he might not have been so pampered: though fathers spoil their children sometimes!"

"Mine spoils me, I think. But then there is an excuse, after all, for spoiling me."

"My dear Miss Bodkin, you cannot suppose that I had any such meaning."

"You? Oh, no! You are honest: you never speak in innuendoes. But it is true, you know. My father and mother have spoiled me. Poor father and mother! I am but a miserable, frail little craft for them to have ventured so much love and devotion in!"

It was not in mortal man—not even in mortal man whose heart was filled with a passion for another woman—to refrain from a tender glance and a soft tone, in answer to Minnie's pathetic little plaint. Her beauty and her intellect might be resisted: her helplessness, and acknowledgment of peculiar affliction, could not be.

"Ah!" said Matthew Diamond; "who would not embark all their freight of affection in such a venture as the hope that you would love them again? I think your parents are paid."

It has been said that Mr. Diamond's calm, grave face raised an indefinite expectation in the beholder. When he said those words to Minnie Bodkin, you would have thought, if you had been watching him, that you had found the key of the puzzle, and that an ineffable tenderness was the secret that lay hid beneath that grave mask. The stern mouth smiled, the stern eyes beamed, the straight brows were lifted in a compassionate curve. Minnie had never seen his face with that look on it, and the change in it gave her a curious pang, half of pain, half of pleasure. Strong conflicting feelings battled in her. She was strung to a high pitch

of excitement; and her eyes brightened, and her pulse beat quicker—all for a look, a smile, a beam of the eye from this staid, quiet schoolmaster! What do we know of the thought in our neighbour's brain? of the thrill that makes his heart flutter? We do not care for this air-bubble. How can he? It is yonder beautiful transparent ball, all radiant with prismatic colours, that we expend our breath upon. Up it goes—up, up, up—look! No; our stupid neighbour is watching his own airy sphere, which is not nearly so beautiful; and which, we know, will burst presently!

The game of *vingt-et-un* comes to an end. Almost at the same moment the whist-players break up, and come trooping into the drawing-room; trooping and talking rather noisily, to say the truth, as though to indemnify themselves for the silence which Doctor Bodkin insists upon during the classic game. Mrs. Bodkin bustles up to her daughter; hopes she is not tired; thinks she looks a little fagged; wonders why she did not have any music, as she generally likes Rose McDougall's Scotch ballads; supposes Mr. Diamond preferred not to play, as she sees he has been sitting out, and trusts he has not been bored.

But of all the people present, Mrs. Bodkin alone guesses that Minnie has enjoyed her evening, and why. And, with her mother's and woman's instinct, she knows that Minnie's pleasure would have been spoiled by guessing that it had been guessed. For the rest, this small anxious-faced woman cares but little. She would tear your feelings to mince-meat to feed the fancies of her daughter, as ruthlessly as any maternal vixen would slay a chicken for her cubs; although, for herself, no hare is milder or more timid.

The Miss McDougalls are in good spirits. They have won, and they have had the two young men all to themselves, for Ally Dockett in short frocks doesn't count. Also Minnie Bodkin has kept aloof. That bright lamp of hers is not favourable to such twinkling little rush-lights as Rose and Violet are able to display. But this evening they have not been quenched by a superior luminary, and are quite radiant and cheerful. Dr. Bodkin, too, is contented in his lofty manner; for there has been no music, and he has enjoyed his rubber in peace. Colonel Whistler has lost, but the stakes are always modest at Dr. Bodkin's table, and he doesn't mind it. Over the feelings of

the Rev. Peter Warlock it will, perhaps, be best to draw a veil. The reverend gentleman stalks in, and sits down in a corner, whence he can stare at Minnie unobserved. It is the only comfort he enjoys throughout the evening. And for this he thinks it worth while to submit to the *peine forte et dure* of playing whist, with Colonel Whistler for his partner.

Mrs. Errington sails towards Minnie's sofa, and suddenly stops short, and opens her eyes very wide.

Mr. Diamond, who is the object of her gaze, rises and bows. "Good evening, madam," he says, unable to repress a smile at her manifest astonishment on beholding him there.

"Why, how do you do, Mr. Diamond? Dear me! I little expected to see you this evening. Dear Minnie, how are you now? Well, this is a surprise!"

Then, as Mr. Diamond moves away, Mrs. Errington takes his chair beside Minnie, and says to her confidentially—"Now, I hope, Minnie, you won't owe me a grudge for it; but I must confess that if it hadn't been for me, you wouldn't have had that gentleman to entertain this evening."

"What on earth do you mean?" cries Minnie, with scant ceremony, and flashes an impatient glance at the lady's soft, smiling, self-satisfied visage.

"My dear, I advised him to come here a little oftener. I think he felt diffident, you know, and all that. Poor man, he is rather dull, although Algy is always crying up his talents. But it really is kind to bring him forward a little. I asked him to tea the other night. You see he must feel it a good deal when people are affable, and so on, for"—here her voice sank to a whisper—"he told me himself that he had been a sizar."

With all which benevolent remarks, Miss Bodkin is, of course, highly delighted. She does not forget them either; for after the negus has been drunk, and the sandwiches eaten, and the company has departed, she says to her father, "Papa, was Mr. Diamond a sizar?"

"I don't know, child. Very likely. None the worse for that, if he were."

"The worse! No!" returns Minnie, with a superb smile.

"Who says he was?"

"Mrs. Errington."

"Pooh! Ten to one it isn't true then. She has her good points, poor woman, but the Ancrams are all liars; every one of

them! Greatest liars in all the Midland Counties. It runs in the family, like gout."

"It does not seem likely, certainly, that Mr. Diamond should have confided the circumstance to Mrs. Errington," observed Minnie, thoughtfully.

"Confided! No; I never knew a man less likely to confide anything to anybody."

"However, after all, it is a thing which all the world might know, isn't it, papa?"

Dr. Bodkin was not interested in the question. He gave a great loud yawn, and declared it was time for Minnie to go to bed.

"It doesn't follow that I'm sleepy because you yawn, papa!" she said saucily.

"You are tired though, puss! I see it in your face. Go to bed. Mrs. Bodkin, get Minnie off to rest."

He bent to kiss his daughter, and bid her good night.

"Say 'God bless' me, papa," she whispered, drawing his head down and kissing his forehead.

"Don't I always say it? God bless you, my darling!"

There were tears in Minnie's eyes as she turned her head away among her cushions. But nobody saw them. She talked to the maid who undressed her, about Mr. Powell, the Methodist preacher, and asked her if she had heard him, and what the folks said about him in the town.

"No, Miss Minnie. I've never heard him. And I know master wouldn't think it right for any of us to be going to a dissenting chapel. But I do think as there's some good to be got there, miss. For my brother Richard—him that lives groom at Pudcombe Hall—he went and got—got 'conversion,' I think they call it, at Mr. Powell's. And since then he's never touched a drop of liquor, nor a bad word never comes out of his month. And he says he's quite happy and comfortable in his mind, miss."

"Is he? How I envy him!"

## ODD MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT.

### IN TWO PARTS. PART I.

BEARING carefully in mind the privilege of Parliament, I am yet tempted by recent events to evoke from the shadows of the past the ghosts of those quaint and singular, if, often, brave and accomplished men, who have, from time to time, contributed, by their peculiarities, to the astonishment or amusement of the House of Commons, and of the nation at large. Many figures, which



loom large and godlike through the mist of history, reveal a host of very human oddities when looked at through the spectacles kindly transmitted to us by their contemporaries. The great Pitt, in his latter days, wears a curiously histrionic aspect; Pitt the Second, "renowned for ruining Great Britain gratis," appears as "the boy;" Lord Bath as the thoughtless politician who allowed himself to be "kicked up into the Lords;" and the courtly Chesterfield as a rash youth indulging in a stump oration. At one period the deliberations of the Commons were pervaded by the fumes of tobacco, at another they were illumined by the inspiration of wine. In the days of Lord North, honourable members went down to the House in court suits, orders and ribands—blue and red—to-day a seedy overcoat and a shocking bad hat may veil the majestic proportions of a cabinet minister.

Fortunately for the country, a large majority of the House has, at all times, been composed of those whom I may not irreverently call the Great Inarticulates.

Single-speech Hamilton waited for a whole year before he delivered that famous oration which has immortalised him; but he was not possessed of the patience of Hare, the friend of Fox. The latter famous speaker, when congratulated on the effect of a splendid speech, would say, quietly, "Wait till you hear Hare"—who had been his old schoolfellow at Eton, and whose brilliant rhetoric was expected to throw even Fox into the shade; but Hare never started from his "form." Another Etonian celebrity, Bobus Smith, made an effort, but halted, stammered, and broke down badly—hopelessly mute for the future. The immortal Gibbon was at first not disinclined to become a talking member, and wrote, "If my confidence was equal to my eloquence, and my eloquence to my knowledge, perhaps I might make no very intolerable speaker. At all events I shall try to expose myself. 'Semper ego auditor tantum, nunquamne reponam;'" but this ardour soon cooled down. In plain language, the historian of the Decline and Fall allowed himself to be crowded out by the Noisy Emptinesses. "There was an inundation of speakers—young speakers in every sense of the word—that neither Lord George Germaine nor myself could find room for a single word." Later on he despaired. "As yet I have been mute. In the course of our American affairs

I have sometimes had a wish to speak; but, though I felt tolerably prepared as to the matter, I dreaded to expose myself in the manner, and remained in my seat, safe but inglorious; upon the whole, though, I still believe I shall try. I doubt whether nature—not that in some instances I am ungrateful—has given me the talents of an orator, and I feel that I came into Parliament much too late to exert them." At the period referred to Gibbon was thirty-seven, and soon after gave up all hope of speaking in the House. "Isaac Hawkins Browne," said Dr. Johnson, "one of the first wits in this country, got into Parliament, and never opened his mouth." "For my own part," saith Boswell, with his usual pragmatism, "I think it is more disgraceful never to try to speak than to try and fail, as it is more disgraceful not to fight than to fight and be beaten."

The vice of the present day is certainly neither shyness nor brevity. On subjects of comparatively slight importance parliamentary orators dilate at unreasonable length. There is a good rule against this insufferable prolixity: "If any one speak too long and speak within the matter, he may not be cut off; but if he be long and out of the matter, then may the Speaker gently admonish him of the shortness of the time or the business of the House, and pray him to make as short as he may." But, unhappily, this rule has fallen into desuetude, and the House has now no practical remedy but a count-out, and the defensive laws against reading a written speech or speaking in a sitting posture. The necessity of the practice of counting out is shown in several remarkable instances. On one occasion an unmerciful orator, haranguing to empty benches, whispered to a friend, "I am speaking to posterity." "If you go on at this rate," replied the friend, "you will see your audience before you." It is recorded of Hartley, the most prosaic and "everlasting" of speakers, that Mr. Jenkinson left the House as he rose to speak, rode to Wimbledon, dined, rode back, and found the unconscionable talker still prosing on to a select and patient few. On another occasion, when he had all but cleared the House, and wished some clause in the Riot Act to be read, "You have read it already," exclaimed Burke; "the mob is dispersed." Curiously enough, Burke was himself so outrageous an offender in this direction that he was nicknamed "the

dinner-bell"—so promptly were honourable members affected by the fine rich brogue in which he poured out his eloquent periods and multitudinous, if sometimes rather mixed, metaphors.

At the present date, when men are content to remain at school till they are nearly a quarter of a century old, it is curious to find that previously to the Act passed shortly after the Revolution, the House was inundated by members whose excessive youth gave great umbrage to the surly Puritans. By this statute, the election of all members not of full age is rendered null and void. The Convention must have been of mature age, eight years having elapsed since the last of Charles the Second's Parliaments, as none were convened but those who had sat in the Parliaments of that and the preceding reign. Thus was carried out, on the final expulsion of the Stuarts, a measure earnestly desired by the first of that line, who cautioned Parliament of the ill effect of the House being supplied with "young and inexperienced men, that are not ripe and mature for so grave a council." This counsel was repeated by Charles, but there is little doubt that both father and son were actuated—not by a hatred of youth and inexperience—but by a kingly horror of that freedom; not to say license of speech, in which the younger members were prone to indulge. In the tenth year of King James, there was an account taken of forty gentlemen, not above twenty years of age, and some not exceeding sixteen, which moved Recorder Martin to deliver himself as follows: "It was the ancient custom for old men to make laws for young men; but now the case is altered, and children are elected into the great council of the nation, who come to invade and invert nature, and to enact laws to govern their fathers." At a later date, Prynne and other Puritan elders of the sourest type observed that "Parliament was not a place to enter whelps in." In spite of these growls, many young men sat during the Commonwealth, one of whom stood up and "told a story of Cain and Abel, and made a speech, nobody knew to what purpose;" but the honour of youth was well maintained by Lord Falkland, whose admission, in 1658, was violently opposed by some, on the ground that he had not "sown his wild oats." He replied, promptly, "If I have not, I may sow them in this House, where there are plenty of geese to pick

them up." Other young men triumphantly vindicated the truth that whatever may be the case with wisdom, oratory flourishes better in the green tree than in the dry. Waller, not only an admirable poet, but a brilliant speaker, drew thunders of applause from the house before he was seventeen; and the first Lord Shaftesbury swayed his audience with irresistible power at the age of nineteen. In some cases, no doubt, honourable members were very young. James Herbert sat in the Pensioners' Parliament at the age of fifteen; and Lord Torrington is said to have been but fourteen when he took part in a debate. These extreme cases probably helped to bring about the 7th of William III.; but for a long while after the Act was passed, members were admitted who were certainly under age. The famous Lord Chesterfield, then Lord Stanhope, was undoubtedly elected when he was not of full age, and certainly gave slight promise of his future career in the oration which he had studied for a month beforehand. Attacking the Oxford ministry, he declared that "he never wished to spill the blood of any of his countrymen, *much less the blood of any nobleman*, but that he was persuaded the safety of his country required that examples should be made of those who had betrayed it in so infamous a manner." This violent onslaught was met in the most strategic manner by the opposite party, of whom the Duke of Ormond was the personage mainly pointed at. As soon as Stanhope had done speaking, he was called aside, complimented, and told that he was under age, but that there was no disposition to expose him, unless he attempted to vote. Lord Stanhope, who knew that he had exposed himself to a penalty of five hundred pounds, made no reply but a low bow, quitted the House directly, and went to Paris.

Similar indulgence is said to have been shown to Fox, who was smuggled into the House at nineteen. St. John, Pulteney, Windham, Charles Townshend, the two Pitts, Sheridan, Grey, Canning, Brougham, Peel, and Stanley, all trod the arena of debate in the flush of manhood. Lawyers excepted, Burke is the only instance of an orator of the first rank who did not gain a seat till thirty-six. It is true that Mr. Bright nearly approached that age, being thirty-three when he was returned for Durham; but his training during the Anti-Corn-Law

agitation had already developed his extraordinary oratorical power.

The duty of keeping orators, young and old, within the proper bounds of good behaviour, has not infrequently proved a difficult task. One of the tremendous bolts launched by the Speaker against an unruly member is the threat that he will name him. Arthur Onslow used to fulminate in the deepest baritone, "Order, sir; I will name you presently; order, order; I will name you." On one occasion an inquisitive rebel, using the privilege of a very young member, asked him what would actually be the consequence, if the Speaker should name him. The Speaker, after a grave pause, replied in a spirit of solemn fun, "The Lord in Heaven only knows." Mr. Fuller, the member for Southampton found out to his cost what was the consequence of being "named." Entering the House in a very "after dinner" state, this humorous gentleman, in a stage whisper, compared the Speaker in his wig to an owl in an ivy-bush. Some say that he called upon him for a song. The unhappy Fuller was at once "named," and handed over to the sergeant. The next day the Speaker, Charles Abbott, administered a severe and dignified rebuke to the culprit.

Few more eccentric members ever sat in the House of Commons than that Mr. Asgill, who, in 1707, underwent the doom of expulsion. This Asgill was a lawyer of sharp practice and unenviable notoriety, and was patronised in early life by Dr. Barebones, a famous projector of the period, who built the New Square of Lincoln's Inn. In Barebones's will Asgill was nominated his executor and residuary legatee, upon express condition that he would pay none of the testator's debts. The excellent executor proved thoroughly equal to the trust reposed in him. Summoning the creditors together in Lincoln's Inn Hall, he there, with proper gravity, read aloud to them the will, concluding, "You have heard, gentlemen, the deceased's testament; I will religiously fulfil the wishes of the dead." In those days of imprisonment for debt and easy arrest, his power might have proved unequal to his honest inclination, had not all difficulties been provided for. Dr. Barebones had secured the borough of Bramber by purchasing the whole street; and as Asgill became the owner of the town on his death, he had canvassed, with success, the votes of the electors, and thus secured a sanctuary

which no sheriff's officer would dare to violate. Asgill sat and voted for several sessions; and when the commissioners repaired to Ireland, in 1699, to resume the grants of forfeited estates, he went over to practice as a conveyancer, and made an ample fortune. Now, however, he committed the prime error of his life. He wrote a book. This luckless volume was entitled a "Treatise on the Possibility of avoiding Death," wherein he advanced a theory that Christians might be, as he styles it, "translated" into eternal life without undergoing the preliminary penalty of death. This performance soon got him into trouble. Having bought a life estate of three thousand pounds a year for a small consideration, he had gained a seat in the Irish House of Commons, but was expelled at the end of four days, on account of his book. "If his work were from above," he said, "it would kindle like a firebrand, and set the whole world in arms against death. If men and women will read the study of a seven years' recluse, they will find it not the most unpleasant hour that ever they spent in their lives. For this I know, that nothing is more pleasant to us than news, and what I have said was never said by man before." Turned out of the Irish Parliament, he returned to England, and sat for Bramber without objection. In an interval of Parliament, in 1707, being taken in execution at the suit of a creditor, he was committed to the Fleet. When the House met, he petitioned for his discharge, and was delivered by the sergeant with his mace. But between his apprehension and discharge, the renown of his unlucky book had reached London, and complaint was made of it to the House. Asgill, who was an admirable writer, defended himself vigorously, but was, nevertheless, expelled, and was just lucky enough to escape by stratagem from the officers who lay in wait at the very door of the House.

For the remaining thirty years of his life he was hunted from one prison to another, and ultimately died at the age of eighty, after writing many pamphlets in such idiomatic English as to induce Coleridge to pronounce him and Defoe the two best writers of our language.

Not long after the expulsion of Asgill from the House, a far better fellow and immeasurably superior writer underwent the same fate. The author of the *Conscious Lovers* and the *Tatler*, the uxorious husband of his "dearest

Prue," was, for no personal demerit, but simply by the force of party hatred, removed from the House of Commons. Sir Richard Steele was a provoking opponent in politics. His keen sense of ridicule and his satirical power exasperated Swift and other leading Tories. On his return as member for Stockbridge—a result mainly due to his papers in the *Guardian*—he produced the "Crisis," and a motion was immediately made to expel him "for having maliciously insinuated that the Protestant succession in the House of Hanover was in danger under Her Majesty's administration." From the first day of the new Parliament it had been evident that his political opponents would spare no effort to crush him. Harley, Bolingbroke, and Swift, the party of reaction, were for the time being in the majority, and poor Steele was received with a hiss of scorn on his first appearance in the House. In fact, the ability and covert sarcasm of Steele's attacks had roused the rage of the Tories to the highest pitch. A passage like the following was certainly calculated to irritate the Jacobite cabal:—"Those noisy men," wrote Steele, "who embarrass the nation in every question with calling out 'the Church,' are but like the weathercocks and clappers of the steeple; the sober and laborious and peaceable churchmen are its real support and pillars. I wish that his electoral highness of Hanover would be so grateful as to signify to all the world the perfect good understanding he has with the Court of England, in as plain terms as Her Majesty was pleased to declare she had with that house on her part."

At the moment of the attack on Steele the Tories had it all their own way; but, nevertheless, his friends rallied to his support with all the strength they could muster. Robert Walpole and General Stanhope took their place on either side of him as he waited at the bar, and Addison officiated as prompter. Steele spoke for nearly three hours with such temper, eloquence, and unconcern, as gave entire satisfaction to his friends, who fought hard for him. Walpole showed himself equal to the occasion, and the speech of Lord Finch created a sensation. This young nobleman, afterwards a famous speaker, owed gratitude to Steele for having repelled in the *Guardian* a libel on his sister, and rose to defend her defender. In this, his maiden speech, the young orator was overcome by bashfulness; and,

after stammering through a few sentences, sat down, crying out, "It is strange I cannot speak for this man, though I could readily fight for him." Hereat, such volleys of cheers rang through the House that the young lord took heart, rose again, and made the first of a long series of telling and able speeches. But nothing could save Steele, who was expelled by a majority of nearly a hundred in a house of four hundred members.

This "most agreeable rake that ever trod the round of indulgence"—a rake among scholars and a scholar among rakes—was not doomed to any long period of exclusion. The death of Queen Anne scattered the Tory majority, consigned Oxford to the Tower, and drove Bolingbroke into exile. Steele was returned to Parliament for Boroughbridge, by the interest of the Duke of Newcastle, and achieved some success as a speaker, at a period when the House was singularly barren of oratorical genius. He described the House as consisting very much of silent people, oppressed by the choice of a great deal to say, and of eloquent people, ignorant that what they said was nothing to the purpose. Shortly after Steele's return to the House, the whole country was convulsed by the bursting of the South Sea Bubble. It would seem that, during this trying period, he exhibited energy tempered by unusual moderation. A panic had seized upon the House, and several members came to signal grief. Great vindictiveness was displayed towards them. Sir George Caswall, a wealthy banker, who had assisted the Government with vast sums of money at three per cent. interest, at a time when they could not obtain a loan elsewhere, found the classical plea, that he had served the republic well, no defence for putting his hand into John Bull's breeches' pocket. He was expelled the House, sent to the Tower, and ordered to refund a quarter of a million. Lord Sunderland was implicated, and was obliged to resign his seat in the cabinet. Charles Stanhope, whose fraudulent transfer of stock it had been sought to conceal, by the lame device of changing the name from Stanhope to Stangape, just escaped expulsion by a majority of three. Craggs saw only one way to escape unutterable ignominy, and did about the best thing he could under the circumstances—he died. Aislabie, Chancellor of the Exchequer, imprudently lived to experience the full weight of



insular vengeance. Contrary to his oath of office, he had speculated in the funds of the company, burnt the account-books, and made, it was said, two hundred and fifty-two thousand pounds. He was expelled without a division; his path to the Tower was illuminated by bonfires, and not a vestige of property was left to him excepting only the estate he could be proved to have possessed in October, 1718. These instances, and the still more curious case of Sir Robert Sutton, in 1730, show that the responsibility of directors was considered a much graver matter then than it is in the present day. Poor Sir Robert Sutton, who represented the county of Nottingham, was a worthy gentleman, of unimpeachable personal honour, but was unfortunate enough to become one of the directors of the Charitable Corporation—a company, the principle of whose proceedings, said Fielding, “was a method invented by some very wise men, by which the rich might be charitable to the poor, and be still money in pocket by it.” The innocent baronet had been imposed upon by the artful representations of promoters, and duped by the silly vanity of seeing his name among a list of titled and honourable directors. Being naturally indolent, he paid little attention to the affairs of the company, and smarted severely for his folly: as he not only lost twenty thousand pounds, but, together with Sir Archibald Grant and Serjeant Bond, was dismissed the House for participating in the affairs of the company. Mr. W. C. Townsend, in his excellent “Memoirs of the House of Commons,” says that the last-mentioned of these charitable directors was hitched into rhyme for having exclaimed, impatiently, when the sufferings of the poor had been urged against some change that he meditated, “D—n the poor!”

Than the lowest deep of infamy,  
A lower depth was found.

One of the heroes of Pope's famous line on the odd distribution of riches—

To Ward, to Waters, Chartres, and the Devil—

was also doomed to be kicked out of the House. Mr. Ward, who had purchased the borough of Weymouth, was in 1727 prosecuted by the Duchess of Buckingham for forgery; and on his conviction was expelled the House, after being required to attend in his place. He absconded, but was afterwards taken, and stood in the pillory like no common villain, being attended by footmen in livery as if in a

chair of state. This very black sheep was endowed with a fleece worth two hundred thousand pounds, acquired by every kind of villainy. When the estate of Sir John Blount had, by Act of Parliament, been confiscated to the property of the South Sea Company, Mr. Ward joined with the knight in a conveyance to secrete fifty thousand pounds. This was set aside as fraudulent; but he nevertheless made a like attempt when his own real estate had been forfeited in consequence of his conviction for felony; but the Court of Chancery annulled the conveyances to brother and son which he strove to set up. Rather than discover his personality, he remained in Newgate, and whiled away the time by poisoning dogs and cats, and watching their agonies.

### POISON-BERRIES.

THERE is an old, old story of Miss Edgeworth, or of some such forgotten instructress of youth, concerning truant children who took an unauthorised walk in the woods, and there met with temptation in the shape of certain glistening, bright-coloured berries, forbidden dainties according to nursery law. How they ate the berries; how they scratched their fingers and tore their clothes upon the thorns; how they left their shoes in the mire; lost their way; and came home weary, wet, crestfallen, and very ill, followed as an inevitable sequence. Equally logical was the conclusion that an eighteenth century doctor, and an eighteenth century whipping, remedied the moral and physical mishaps of these youthful rebels; and the facile deduction was that, under pain of physic and the birch, good little children should confine themselves to the secure paths of domestic discipline.

Poison-berries, of one sort or another, exist in endless profusion throughout this world of ours: Protean in their marvellous powers of self-transformation, Puck-like in the apparent malignity with which, in unguarded moments, they obtrude themselves upon our notice. For a few—born, for the most part, in the purple of royalty, but collaterally railed off from the direct path to the throne—such poisonous fruits take form as jewelled crowns, sparkling sceptres, and all the suggestive paraphernalia of a monarch. It is only in very recent times that sultans have grown too mild to invest obnoxious brothers with

the order of the silken bowstring, or that Christian kings have ceased to regard their nearest and dearest as greedy plotters, intent on snatching away the diadem from the brows that wore it. Coronets have exercised a wider-spread, but, at the same time, a much less potent form of fascination; and the same may be said of stars of knighthood, of crosses and medals, of the gold key of a court chamberlain, of the velvet baton of a marshal, and of many another variety of those glittering gewgaws which Mephistopheles gives to Faust wherewith to awake the dawning vanity of Marguerite.

Sometimes such berries take the enticing shape of a rich man's caprice, the ungratified desire for something—a trifle, very likely, which is not in the market. It is, not seldom, out of pure wantonness, that Ahab craves for Naboth's little patch of vineyard to add to his own stately demesne. Idleness, ease, and the habit of finding deference everywhere, cause such a wish, once formed, to grow to portentous proportions, like Jonah's gourd. It is well when the land-hunger of some mighty magnate only leads him to press a fancy price upon the petty owner of the few poor coveted acres, that the Marquis of Carabas pines to include within his seigneurial ring-fence. The old chroniclers give us a pithy illustration now and then of the manner in which the Carabas of some centuries since was wont to rectify his frontiers. Three cold-blooded conspiracies, culminating in two treacherous assassinations and a judicial murder of unblushing effrontery, went to the score of a single Scottish earl in the process of winning the estate of one small priory. It would take a library-full of law reports to catalogue the fashion in which many a princely property was rounded off to its present fair dimensions.

Publicity, an improved police, and the gradual abolition of class-privilege, have combined to render impossible the old high-handed fashions of wrong-doing. We are very far, as yet, from a millennium of peace and goodwill; but, at least, there is an end of riding rough-shod over the lowly and the weak. The old oppressor of the widow and the fatherless—he of whom the Hebrew prophet and psalmist spoke so often—no longer arrives with shining spears and trampling horsemen, to drive off the little flock, and break down the modest landmark, and despoil the household gear, of his unwarlike victims. He

wears black broadcloth now, a broad-brimmed hat and ecclesiastical necktie, and, but for his bunch of gold seals and drab gaiters, might be mistaken for a dean. If one of the companies of which he is chairman does occasionally collapse, the trusting relicts and spinsters whom his spotless reputation has led to place their little all in his sleek hands, are never quite sure whether or no they have been swindled out of the money that they miss so sorely.

The desire to be rich is so natural that some suspicion of insincerity is apt to attach itself to the moralist who, out of the pulpit, carps at it. But wealth may be bought too dear in the world's great mart, where the price paid for a new purchase is not always commensurate with its value. The woman who has bartered away her hand for money does not invariably enjoy the good things with which a mercenary match has endowed her. Somehow, the stalled ox, with its sauce of conjugal indifference at best, palls on the jaded palate. The high-stepping carriage-horses in their silver-plated harness cannot trot fast enough to leave care behind. The rare exotics in the costly conservatory scarcely fill the void in a heart, whose owner has deliberately chosen that it should be starved and stinted in the matter of human emotions; and sometimes prudent Mrs. Croesus is weak enough to envy her former friend, who married, as the phrase is, for love, and was thereupon very properly put under the ban of Belgravia.

Poison-berries, for many energetic natures, take the form of rank, or power, or renown, sometimes singly longed for, sometimes inseparably linked in thought with the riches that to most of us seem the fitting meed of success. The dazzling goal may be reached too late. The waters of the well, sand-begirt, for which the wayfarer has thirsted with such fierce intensity of eagerness as he plodded over leagues of scorching desert, may mock the parched lip with their exceeding bitterness. It has often been computed that any healthy man, of average intellect, might grow moderately rich after a quarter of a century's exclusive devotion to money making; but very few are they who have the stubborn courage to be deaf and blind to all earthly or heavenly considerations but one, for five-and-twenty years. Nor does it by any means follow that the something more than competence, once attained, brings with it a large amount of gratification. It is easier to raise, than to exorcise, the

familiar demon that points to swelling money-bags. As the worn-out war-horse never forgets the trumpet calls of the old regiment, so does the veteran cash-hunter continue, when the need for exertion has ceased to exist, to weary out his latter span of days in adding to the useless heap.

The mind should not be too full of one object, be it what it may. Such an engrossing topic is almost sure, by imperceptible degrees, to put forth hurtful qualities, and ultimately develope into a poison-berry. A passion for notoriety of any sort has a terrible reactive power over him who hugs it to his bosom. The boundary-line which separates the far-seeing statesman, the silver-tongued orator, the lucid preacher, from blatant charlatanism is perilously thin, and easily crossed. The merest trifle will make a speech, a sermon, a pamphlet, doubly effective—but at the cost of wilful dishonesty, of a slight transgression of the immutable canons of truth. To win—honestly, if possible, but at any rate to win—is a maxim that has in all ages brought in its substantial rewards, but with the flavour of the honey sadly marred by gall. The bright prize is grasped, only to be found not worth the getting.

All property—and titles, and high degree, and personal fame, are as much property as consols or real estate can be—becomes a poison-berry when it turns into the master, instead of the slave, of him who nominally owns it. This is a truth which, nineteen hundred years ago, just before the Christian era, a Roman patrician, named Nennius, had leisure in his barbarian exile to realise. Poor Nennius had preferred banishment and confiscation to the surrender of the matchless opal, worth eighty thousand pounds of our money, that he wore in his thumb-ring, and which Mark Antony wished to transfer to the queenly brow of gem-loving Cleopatra. The unhappy senator had his opal ring, as he shivered in the chilly blast that waved the birch-trees of the Danube, in exchange for Rome and its feasts and its forum, for the marbles of his pillaged villa on the noble Neapolitan bay, for the fertile estate within sight of the towers and mounds of the huge brick-built mistress of the earth, which Augustus had not as yet transmuted into marble. But the glorious jewel, thus worn, was a poison-berry at the best.

The last instance of an absolute slavery to wealth, in a material form, which has

been seen in our own time, was displayed, not long ago, by a Serene Highness, now deceased. This poor Transparency was cursed by the accredited possession of between three and four million pounds' worth of diamonds, and he suffered all the penalties, short of the last, which accrue to the reputed keeper of so much crystallised carbon. It would be more correct to say that the diamonds possessed him than he the fatal diamonds. The monstrous iron safes, triply secured with ingenious locks, were in his bedroom when he slept, brooding, like so many hideous idols, till the worshipper should awake to do them homage. For their sake the dressing-room was an armoury; the bed-room a fortress, impregnable to mere burglars; the stair a drawbridge that fell away at night; the valets half guards, half suspected thieves, who might at any moment make away with the princely booty; as, indeed, some of the younger and rasher at times tried to do. But, though he feared for his life, though he trembled for his wealth, though his existence was embittered by their presence, H.R.H. clung to his diamonds until the very last.

Of such berries the upas-tree of military glory bears a plenteous crop. The most sluggish pulse is apt to quicken, the dullest eye to brighten, as with flaunting flags and measured tramp, with blare of trumpet and beat of drum, the marching troops go by. The grim and bloody trade of war has in all ages had need of gorgeous trappings and a fair outside, to make men forget to what all this pageant of waving plumes and bright colours, of gay uniforms and gleaming steel, really leads. The very horse that prances in time to the stirring clangour of the music, moving proudly, as if vain of the embroidered housings and jingling bridle, shall one day lie moaning on the midnight turf of a battle-field, maimed by cannon-shot, and feebly striving, with stiffening limbs and ebbing veins, to rise. The most hopeful aspirant for martial laurels would be staggered, could he but see set before him the statistics of the many blanks and the few prizes in that tremendous war-lottery, in which so much is staked for such a poor return. The successful soldier, who has won his way to the top of the ladder, and finds the padded breast of his tunic all too narrow for the stars and crosses that dangle and glitter there, is indirectly the cause of a quick and violent death to thousands of ardent lads, whose hearts

throbbed high as first they donned the warrior's garb, only to swell the casualties in some obscure skirmish or nameless sortie.

That the gambler's passion is a poison-berry few will care to dispute. There is, however, some divergence of opinion as to the classes to be reckoned under that generic name. Of the gentleman who is on affable terms with the croupiers and bankers at Monaco, he who pricks up his ears, when first, on entering the great play-palace for the séance of the day, he hears the melody of tinkling gold and rattling silver, little need be said. He is a gamester confessed, a man whose waking thoughts are busy with fantastic calculations of chances, and who still hearkens in his dreams to the clatter of the rake as it sweeps the green cloth clear of piled up coin and rustling bank notes. As little doubt exists of the mental condition of the youth with a golden horseshoe in his cravat and a morocco-bound betting-book protruding from his pocket—he whose literature consists of sporting newspapers, and whose principal correspondents are turf-agents, and who never gets his bemuddled brain quite clear from the Grand National or the Cesarewitch.

There are very many persons by far too respectable to toss their Napoleons on the black and red at M. Blanc's pleasant Pandemonium, and who neither know nor care which racehorse is at the head of the betting at Tattersall's, yet who are as arrant gamblers as the most hackneyed votary of roulette can be. It is possible to play for a run on Eries, or to "plunge" in Turkish Sixes or Spanish Deferred. Time bargains on the Royal Exchange may make or mar a fortune, at least as easily as can be effected by the cards or the dice. A shaky finance company can bring its backers to grief as readily as an over-rated Derby favourite can do, and, indeed, the gambling in public securities, if more decorous, is, beyond a doubt, the more ruinous variety of the vice.

Very deserving of pity are certain classes of sufferers by the poison-berries that twinkle temptingly on the branches of a tree, which is labelled "high interest." These honest investors have not a particle of the gambling spirit, and merely seek to impart a welcome elasticity to a narrow income. Prices rise, and the country clergyman, and the retired Indian officer, and the widow, and the spinster, grow more and more discontented with the

frugal three per cent. which the Old Lady of Threadneedle-street doles out to them, in Britannia's name. They begin to hanker after Japanese Nines, and Khedive Loans, and Imperial Ottomans. Transatlantic railways tempt them; the flaming prospectus of some company for supplying gas or water to earthquake-ridden municipalities in South America makes their innocent mouths water for the gains which seem ready to drop, like a ripe plum, into any outspread hands that care to receive them. How can these worthy people, who seek as a permanent investment what shrewder practitioners buy only to sell, know of the nice question as to whether, by the aid of native usurers, the next half-yearly coupon will be paid in full. As little do they dream how busy is the Vizier, or the Dewan, or the Captain of the Bastinado, in squeezing and wringing enough small coin out of the taxpaying peasantry, so that the state machine may work smoothly until the next foreign loan be launched. The interest is the one thing they look to, and they are blind to the gaunt spectre of national or commercial bankruptcy that hovers in the background.

Poison-berries, of one kind and another, are so numerous, that even to catalogue them would require a volume of goodly size. A seat in Parliament, the honour, such as it is, of M.P.-ship, has exercised a mischievous fascination over many a man who is proof against coarser temptations to do wrong. There is something unwholesome to the moral fibre, in the constant study of how near to the legal wind it is possible to sail without being unseated on petition. It is not good for the conscience of a candidate, to be for ever engaged in delicate casuistry as to the precise borderland between nursing a borough, and venturing into the forbidden paths of treating or intimidation. To bribe would, of course, be monstrous, but to ask no questions as to a thumping sum left in the hands of the experienced Parliamentary agent, who drills the phalanx of Blue or Yellow voters, is only to show a gentlemanly confidence in a professional adviser. As with the rival candidates, their committees, caucuses, and canvassers, so it is with the more corruptible sort of electors, to whom a vote would appear a worthless privilege, but for its intimate connection with beer unpaid for, eleemosynary cabs, half-crowns to compensate for time lost at the ballot-booth, and not seldom unacknowledged sovereigns, slyly



administered by the more prudent successors of the Man in the Moon. And, then, after a period of impunity, halting Justice overtakes the peccant borough, and one particular poison-berry is extirpated by the pruning knife of disfranchisement.

## ENGLISH CATHEDRALS.

### GLOUCESTER.

ACCORDING to Holinshed, who is always honest, as far as his lights go, Arviragus, the youngest son of Shakespeare's Cymbeline, having borne himself right manfully against Claudius and the Romans, eventually married Genissa, the daughter of the Roman general, and acknowledged himself a vassal of the Imperial City. The town where this marriage, that brought peace to Britain, was celebrated, was Claudocastrium, now called Gloucester. Arviragus died about A.D. 73, and was buried at his capital. The first wife of this puissant chieftain is said to have been the famous Boadicea, whom he divorced, to marry Genissa, and so secure the Roman favour.

How far the Bards noted history correctly is uncertain; but it is quite proved that monkish chroniclers, like Jeffrey of Monmouth, merely perverted earlier works, written by ecclesiastics who had perverted in their turn. That a British chieftain, of the name of Arviragus, once really lived, is provable from Juvenal, inasmuch as that Latin poet, in the fourth satire of his first book, flatters Domitian with the hope of subduing him. It is also proved that when Aulus Plautius, a general of Claudius, defeated Caractacus, he overthrew the fierce Dobuni of Gloucestershire; and Ostorius planted a garrison there, at a place called Glerum, which, according to Richard of Cirencester, was built where Gloucester now stands: the British name of the place being "Caer-Glowe" (fair city). In the opinion of that learned antiquary, Mr. Fosbrooke, Kingsholm was the old agricultural British city, and Gloucester a Roman fort, built to repress the Silures, and one of a line of military stations planted along the rivers Avon and Severn, to bar out the fiery Welsh.

In this city, according to Saxon tradition, King Edmund, being suspected of a leaning towards the Danes, was assassinated by Edric, who had made by witchcraft an image of an archer which, being touched by the king, discharged an arrow and transfigured him. At Gloucester, Edward the Confessor met all his thanes,

soon after the Feast of the Virgin Mary, to consult them how best to drive out the restless Welsh, who had, as usual, invaded Herefordshire. The head of that wild Welsh robber, Rees, brother of King Griffin, of South Wales, was brought here to the Confessor at the Vigil of the Epiphany, where, on two occasions, the Confessor had despatched Harold with armies to punish King Griffin. According to Domesday Survey, this ancient city gave the saintly Confessor thirty-six pounds in money; twelve gallons of honey; thirty-six dieres of iron, each of ten bars; and one hundred iron rods, drawn out for ship-nails. It paid over, however, to the Conqueror, a tighter-handed man, sixty pounds.

It was at Gloucester that Eustace, father of two future kings of Jerusalem—Godfrey and Baldwin—came to visit his brother-in-law, the Confessor. On his return to Canterbury he got into a fearful scrape. One of his retinue, forcing his way into his lodging, was killed by the angry Saxon. The proud earl, firing up at this, came and slew the obnoxious lodging-house keeper and eighteen other base and contumacious Saxon churls. The Canterbury people, disliking these extreme measures, clapped on their armour, set at once upon the French earl, and slew twenty of his men out of hand, driving the earl back to Gloucester, with only one or two servants, much to the saintly king's rage.

William the Conqueror, says Archdeacon Furney, generally held his Christmases at Gloucester, where the foreign ambassadors were dazzled by flocks of archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls, thanes, and knights in golden and very splendid robes. The king always wore his crown, to astonish the ambassadors and the honest Gloucestershire people; kept an uncommonly good table, as the chroniclers unctuously tell us, and was at no time "more courteous, gentle, and kind: his bounty being only equalled by his (stolen) riches." Mr. Lysons presumes that Gulielmus Victor held his parliament in the chapter-house of the abbey, now the library of the cathedral, where, in 1076, the powerful Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, consecrated, at a synod, Peter, Bishop of Lichfield, and deposed the Saxon Abbot of Croyland.

Gloucester was twice burnt in the twelfth century; and, in the reign of Stephen, was an eye-witness of several extraordinary historical scenes. To Glou-

cester rode Robert, Earl of Gloucester, on the arrival of his sister, the Empress Maud. Hot and swift he dashed through the enemy's country, with only twelve lances and twelve mounted archers at his back, to drive out King Stephen's garrison and levy an army. To Gloucester, wounded Stephen was brought, to see Maud; and thither Maud herself, in one of her hair-breadth escapes, was carried, in a horse litter, as a corpse.

Henry the Second and his son, at the feast of Peter and Paul, held a great council here with Rees ap Griffin, and other petty kings of Wales, who, with the Earl of Gloucester, swore to keep back the incursions of the Welsh. William the Legate and Protector of England held a synod here in the absence of Richard Cœur de Lion. In the reign of John, and while that black-hearted usurper was at Gloucester, Gualo, the Papal Legate, excommunicated Lewis the French Prince and all the barons who had demanded the charter. There, says Holinshed, the Earl of Pembroke had the young king, Henry the Third, crowned, he being, as the earl justly remarked, "a young child, pure and innocent of those his father's doings." Upon which the barons, with one consent, says the quaint historian, after some prudent silence and conference, "proclaimed the young gentleman king of England."

The history of Gloucester cathedral is so entirely interwoven with that of the city, that it is impossible altogether to disentangle them. All the kings and barons who came to Gloucester laid offerings on the cathedral altar, and no event that happened at the gates or on the walls of Gloucester but was whispered about at the monks' refectory, or in the long paces in the cathedral cloister.

Henry the Third seems always to have regarded with affection the place of his coronation. After his unsuccessful Welsh expedition he often resided in this town. He held a melancholy Christmas here in 1234, when the Earl Marshal was spreading rebellion through the land. To Gloucester he repeatedly summoned his rebellious barons, who refused to assist him in subjugating Wales, at the invitation of Llewellyn. By-and-by Edward the First held a Parliament at Gloucester in the long workhouse of the abbey, and summoned all persons to show by what authority they held their lands. The laws which were then enacted

went ever after by the name of the Statutes of Gloucester.

Weak and unfortunate Edward the Second was frequently at Gloucester during his troubles, and hung in this city the Sheriff of Hereford and several traitorous barons, little conscious that his own dismal end was coming so soon. Edward's Queen, Isabella, "the she-wolf of France," came straight to Gloucester on her way to hunt down the Despensers, the evil favourites of the king, and here the northern and Welsh barons converged, to swell her army. Edward the Third, always generous and kindly, granted Gloucester a seven days' fair, beginning on the Eve of the Baptism, and Richard the Second confirmed the permission. The latter king also held a Parliament here in 1378, to be well out of the reach of the stormy Londoners.

Henry the Fourth also held a Parliament at Gloucester, which sat for forty-four days, according to Prynne, but Holinshed says it was soon removed to London. Henry the Sixth also held Parliament at Gloucester, and the townspeople complained to him that the Welsh of the Marches often seized the barges and floats of their merchants in the Severn, and compelled them to hire Welsh "scows" at exorbitant rates.

The Earl of March (afterwards Edward the Fourth), was lying at Gloucester when the overwhelming news came of the loss at Wakefield, and the beheading of his father. The Welsh, however, cheered him up, and urged him on to Shrewsbury to levy a new Yorkist army. Just before the battle of Tewkesbury, Queen Margaret attempted to surprise Gloucester, which was a Yorkist city, but the king sent Richard Beauchamp to put the town on its guard, and thus the Lancastrians on their arrival were baffled.

To Gloucester, too, came that evil man, cankered in mind and deformed in body, to tempt the Duke of Buckingham to help murder his nephews. When the Duke revolted he led his army of unwilling Welshmen through the Forest of Dean, intending to have forded the Severn at Gloucester, but a ten days' flood thwarted him, and he lost his head soon after.

Soon after Bosworth, Henry the Seventh rode from Worcester to Gloucester, and was received by the mayor and all the aldermen in scarlet gowns, and by the friars of all the parish churches. At the cathedral door the abbot and the

monks welcomed the victorious king, the mitred abbot sang the high mass, the Bishop of Worcester preached, showing the people the Pope's Bull sanctioning Henry. Years after the town of Gloucester contributed eighty-eight pounds towards making unlucky Prince Arthur (Henry's eldest son) a knight.

That magnificent tyrant, Henry the Eighth, visited Gloucester on one occasion. During the civil wars Waller and Maurice held Gloucester bravely against the Cavaliers, and afterwards helped to capture Hereford for the Parliament. In due time, when the Royalist reaction came, Gloucester flashed up as loyal as other towns. The mayor, on a scaffold at the north end of the wheat market, stood with the king's colours waving over his head, with six fair Gloucestershire gentlewomen holding garlands, to hear one of the sheriffs proclaim King Charles, after which a regiment of foot and three troops of horse fired their guns, sounded their trumpets, and beat their drums, while three conduits ran with wine, and the foolish fickle people cheered till they grew red in the face.

When sulky James the Second came to Gloucester he snubbed Bishop Frampton and the clergy who came to welcome him, and, without listening to his speech, said ungraciously, "My lord, it will be better for you to withdraw and your clergy," and so rode on, appointing Father Warner to say grace at dinner, upon which the bishop withdrew. The king then attended the Roman service in an impromptu chapel over the sheriff's court, and is said to have touched for the Evil at the deanery where he lodged. He subsequently visited the cathedral with an eye to alterations, which his premature departure to France prevented his carrying out.

In 1788, when good, dull, old George the Third, snuffy Charlotte, and the four blowsy princesses visited Bishop Halifax and George Selwyn at Matson, after seeing the great pin manufactory — pins were first manufactured at Gloucester in the reign of James the First — the infirmary, and the county goal then building, they attended divine service at the cathedral. The king, with the usual tact and memory of kings, seemed to know the names and family of every clergyman presented to him by the bishop or dean. In 1807 the Prince of Wales accepted the freedom of the city, dined jovially with the obsequious corporation, and affected an interest in the

grand cathedral, under whose august roof even baser princes had walked. In 1816 the Iron Duke came to see the same standard lion of the city, received the freedom of the city "in a superb oak box lined with gold," and dined with the mayor and aldermen. The Duke shook hands with the hearty crowd and with difficulty persuaded them not to take the horses out of his carriage. The duke's toast after dinner was "Blucher," though it had not yet been proved by Berlin historians that the Prussians really won Waterloo.

But now to the more personal history of the cathedral, as detached altogether from that of the town. The abbey of St. Peter is supposed to have originated in a nunnery founded by Wulpher, King of Mercia, on a spot already sanctified by some early Briton church or chapel. During the wars of the Heptarchy the place was again deserted, but Rernulph, King of the Mercians, restored the sacred building, and filled it with secular canons. This Rernulph finally fell under the sword of Egbert.

The Golden Legend relates a curious story of these secular canons of Gloucester. They and the canons of Worcester contended for the body of Kenelm, a Saxon saint, a Prince of Mercia, who had been murdered by his sister, Quendred, and at whose tomb profitable miracles were being wrought. The dispute grew hot and the weather was hotter. At last a wise man proposed that the men of the two shires should go to sleep at the same time, and whichever God should first awake should take the body and go their way. Now the Abbot of Winchcombe and the Gloucestershire men, who, perhaps, slept with one eye open, singularly enough awoke first, and quietly levanted with the very profitable body of St. Kenelm. King Canute compelled the secular canons to adopt the Benedictine rules. The Compendiary Memorial, compiled since the Restoration, tells us that these monks so exasperated the governor and townspeople of Gloucester, that Wulphin le Rose, the governor, at last drove them away, and slew seven of them between Churcham and Gloucester.

A fire having destroyed the abbey in 1058, it was rebuilt nearer the city by Aldred, Bishop of Worcester. Wulstan, a monk of the city, appointed abbot by Aldred, died during a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and, being brought home, was buried by the angry monks under a yew tree in

the centre of the cloisters, as a waster of the convent's goods. It was in this church that during a sermon on the words "Blessed are the peacemakers," a bishop of Worcester is said to have three times cast a devil out of one of his auditors, who had refused to pardon his enemy the murder of his brother. Abbot Serlo increased his monks to the number of one hundred, and brought from Thornbury the relics of St. Arild, a virgin who had been martyred there in the Pagan times.

In the abbacy of William Goodman, during mass, and while the deacon was reading the Gospel, lightning set fire to the steeple, and the whole monastery was destroyed, all but a few books and three robes. In the Abbacy of Hameline, as Roger, Bishop of Worcester, was celebrating mass at the high altar, the great tower of the church suddenly fell, but the bishop remained unmoved at his devotions, and, by a special monastic miracle, no one was hurt, the tower, luckily, being at the west end of the church, and the altar at the east. In the abbacy of Henry Blunt, King John demanded so many waggons with eight horses from the abbey, that all the church chalices had to be sold.

Abbot Foliot, on whom a satire in rhyming Latin was written, impropriated a church to supply the convent with French wine and wastel bread. John de Gamages, "that most noble man," as the annals of Worcester call him, "both for elegance of manners and splendour of wit," was so prudent an abbot that he increased the convent sheep to ten thousand, each worth three shillings, or more than three bushels of wheat; "a man of excellent religion," writes the chronicler; "and on the Sunday on which is sung *Misericordia Domini*, in the morning passed to the Lord, and the Dominical letter was B. He had been a monk in the same church sixty-two years, and was buried on Wednesday with great honour near the gate of the cloister. Whose face appeared so joyful and red as if no infirmity had touched him, and whom succeeded Lord John Choky (or Tokey), sub-prior of the same place."

This was that noble and independent man who ventured, in the very teeth of that hell kite Isabella, and her paramour, Roger Mortimer, to receive and bury in Gloucester cathedral the murdered King Edward the Second. The poor mutilated body had remained unburied from October,

1327, to January, 1328, and St. Augustine at Bristol, St. Mary Kingswood, and St. Aldholm of Malmesbury had refused it a grave. Considering that Lord Berkeley received five pounds, or the pay of six hundred men daily, for warding the body, equal to twenty pounds a day in modern money, there is no wonder there was no eagerness for the funeral of the despised monarch. The abbot, covering his chariot with canvas dyed black and blazoned with the abbey arms, and providing himself with a silver vase, at an outlay of thirty-seven pounds eight shillings, hastened to Berkeley Castle and brought thence the embalmed body and the royal heart (not worth much, by-the-by, alive or dead), and they were received by a procession of the whole city, and the whole convent, solemnly attired, and buried near the high altar. That miracles to reimburse this outlay were soon reported at the tomb, was no more than could have been expected, and the monkish showmen quickly placed a full and uncoloured statement of them at the shrine, which soon drew the timid and the credulous from all parts of England.

The next abbot was John Wygmore, a great builder and embroiderer; and he gave the abbey a rich cope, to be worn at Pentecosts. He built the dormitory and the choir, at the entrance of which his body was found, on new paving the nave, in 1787: the serge robe turned to dust on being touched, but the leather boots were sound, and the silver crozier was entire. In the abbacy of Adam de Staunton, Edward the Third, Queen Philippa, the Black Prince, and many other nobles, visited the shrine of the murdered king, and made offerings—ships of gold, a ruby, and a golden cross, with a piece of the real cross enclosed within it. The royal family were asked to give a hundred pounds, instead of the golden ships. The monastic property was, at this time, valued at four thousand eight hundred and thirty pounds.

Thomas Horton, the next abbot, who had been sacristan to the abbey, gave plate to the refectory, &c.; four silver basins for the high altar (two large for the abbot, and two small for the celebrating priest); two silver candlesticks and a gold chalice for the altar.

In the next abbacy, the convent had sunk to one hundred and seventy marks a year, for fifty-four monks and two hundred servants—less than the wages of me-



chanics. In the abbacy of Walter Froncester—a laborious man, who spent half his patient life writing a chronicle of the abbey, which was eventually lent and, naturally, lost—the abbot procured from the pope the mitre and other episcopal privileges, besides a most agreeable dispensation for the convent, for eating meat during the severe fast between Septuagesima and Quadragesima Sundays. He was buried in a quiet chapel near the choir, but the brasses have long ago been ruthlessly torn from his tomb. At his anniversary, which was kept in two Gloucester churches, cloth gowns were given to the poor. Of Hugh de Morton, the next abbot, we have only this record—“Died, 1420.” Well, perhaps worse men than poor old Abbot Morton have had longer biographies.

John Morwent, the next abbot, rebuilt the west front of the cathedral, and built a porch for the grand old building, so soon to be plundered and defiled.

His successor, Reginald Boulars, went as ambassador to Rome, the convent allowing him there four hundred pounds a year, which, says the learned Fosbrooke, according to Bishop Fleetwood’s scale of prices, was the value of eight thousand bushels of wheat. Pretty pocket-money for our truant pastor, whom Richard the Third threw into prison! His motto was, “Memento, memento.” The mottoes of the last three abbots of Gloucester, says delicious old Fuller, were prophetic (at least, as men have expounded them; for Abbot Lebruck’s was, “Fiat voluntas Domini;” and Abbot Malverne’s (the last abbot), “Mersos suscita” (Raise up those which are absorbed in guiltiness). The last prophecy being fulfilled when Henry the Eighth, after robbing the abbey, raised it to a bishopric.

Thomas Lebroke, the abbot who succeeded Boulars, who was made Bishop of Hereford, built a new tower to the cathedral, and paved the choir with bricks, on which his name and arms still appear. Tully, a monk of the house, was his architect.

William Malverne, alias Parker, the last abbot, seems to have been born somewhat too late, and to have been an exemplary man. His rules to reform the abbey were severe, and point to many flagrant abuses in the unnatural and, latterly, mischievous monastic system. He forbade the brethren, after retiring to the dormitory, to come down again to drink and gossip.

No monk, without license from the sub-prior, was to introduce women into the infirmary, or to indulge there in immoderate drinking. No monk was to sell his food unless he had a license. As the dole-giving also produced brawling and blasphemy, he appointed thirteen regular almsmen (Peter’s men), who were to wear black scapularies and the arms of the monastery on their right shoulders, and they were fined for non-attendance at prime, mass, dirige, evensong, compline, or procession. Last of all, the outrageous martinet forbade the monks all hawking and hunting.

Too late, worthy Abbot Malverne, though thou wert zealous for the Lord and active in thy generation, thou didst beautify King Edward’s Gate, build the vestry in the north transept, and thy burial chapel northward of the choir. The Red Man Wolsey is at thy gates. The cardinal’s sharp-nosed men in black tattle up figures, and find that the revenue of Gloucester Abbey is ten thousand two hundred and twenty-eight pounds. Malverne, alias Parker, however, was stiff, and never surrendered the abbey, though the prior did. He lies still in splendour, in his own chapel, mitred, and in pontificalibus. The two outer escutcheons on his stately tomb bear the emblems of the Passion and four hands, surrounding a heart; in the centre (strange contrast) is a buck tripping, near three bugles.

The Bishops of Gloucester, though they are the younger brothers, as it were, of the English church, have yet not been altogether obscure men. The second bishop was that good man, John Hooper, the martyr, who, it is supposed, was in youth a Cistercian monk. He was cruelly burnt in three successive fires of green wood. “Such ashes are the seed of the church,” said Latimer. Of good Bishop Frampton, a great traveller, a story is told that does him credit. He was kind and generous enough to visit the brutal Judge Jeffreys when he lay in the Tower: he found the brute on a low chair, with a small pot of water by his side; he had “a long beard,” and was weeping by himself. “My lord,” said the worthy bishop, “if you weep for the hardships you suffer, weep no more, for it is unworthy either a man or a Christian; but, if you weep for your past life, weep on, and spare not, for then these tears of yours are more precious than diamonds.” “My lord,” said Jeffreys, with a worthier spirit than usual,

"all the disgraces I have suffered I can now bear, and, by God's grace, will submit to, since I see so much of God's goodness in sending you to me—you, who I never deserved anything from, come when others, who had their all from these hands, desert me. I thank you for your fatherly advice, and desire your prayers, that I may be able to follow it, for God's spirit is moving in you; to which, I beg you would add the friendship of another such, when I trust to receive the sacrament," which, says the writer, he and his wife and children did soon after from the good bishop's hand; and, in a few days, he died tranquilly and in peace with all. Frampton alone, of all the bishops, had the courage to beg the Prince of Orange to take care of their banished king; to which the prince replied, sourly, "I will take care of the Church;" and the bishop soon after fell out of his see. When a bishop was one day praising Queen Mary's piety and charity, Frampton cried out, "Did she ever send a farthing to her father when he begged?" "I can assure you," said the servile sycophant: "her gracious majesty never speaks of her dear absent father but with tears in her eyes." "Tut, man," said ex-Gloucester; "did you never read of the classical creature that sheds tears when it devours?"

Foster, the next bishop, attacked Bunyan in a work entitled, "Dirt wiped out, or a discovery of the gross ignorance and unchristian spirit of one John Bunyan, lay preacher of Bedford."

And now we come to the most remarkable of the Gloucester bishops—the Herculean Warburton, that master of critics and scarifier of little authors. The notes of his "Divine Legation," says a witty commentator on the man, are "the slaughter-houses of his antagonists." Like Marlborough and Swift, the old age of this great and ruthless controversialist ended in insanity.

But a truce to bishops, for the whole legendary history of Gloucester cathedral centres itself round the tomb of Edward the Second, the murdered king. Now we do not murder kings every day. Great architects and great antiquaries have pronounced the tomb of this weak, ill-starred man to be one of the finest sepulchral monuments in Great Britain, both for elegance and ingenuity of form and ingenuity of design. Its special beauty is, that it is built for the cathedral, and blends

with it in every part. In a word (or, at least, two or three), it is a chef d'œuvre of English fourteenth-century work, and is, perhaps, one of our finest and most perfect relics of mediæval art. It is built in three stories, the solemn figure of the king resting on the lower one, and the other two consisting of pierced pinnacles. The face was probably modelled after death, for the expression is one of pain; the attitude is full of repose and dignity. Centuries have passed, and yet Time has wrought little injury upon this kingly monument. This record of Edward the Third's love for his unhappy father is still almost perfect. All that has gone are the jewels in the circlet round the forehead, the bottom of the sceptre, the cross on the globe which the king holds in his left hand, and the rays of the crown. There Edward lies, still, as on that September night when Maltravers and Gournay stole from the castle room, scared and pale, and the castle still rang with the murdered man's shrieks. Dallaway attributes this monument to the sculptor of that of John of Eltham, at Westminster Abbey, which is of precisely the same date. The canopy resembles that over the glorious Scaliger tomb at Verona and the monuments of Charles the Fifth of France, and Jane de Bourbon, at St. Denis. Rysbrach used to stand silent by this tomb, which, Buckler says, is only equalled in design and execution by the Percy monument at Beverley. The white stags on the tomb are family badges of Edward, borne afterwards, and even still more disgraced, by Richard the Second. They gave rise to a vulgar Gloucestershire tradition, that the murdered king was conveyed to his cathedral grave in a chariot drawn by white stags.

Another scarcely less interesting tomb is that of the wretched Robert Curthose, Duke of Normandy. This most unhappy prince, put to death by his savage brother, Rufus, was originally buried in the centre of the choir, opposite the high altar, with a stone over him, marked with a cross, and an effigy of Irish oak. The coronal is composed of pearls, strawberry leaves, and fleur-de-lis alternately. There is no helmet or crest. The surtout is Norman, and so are the chain mail tunic and the wheel spurs. The buff breeches are an invention. The sword belt, hilt, and girdle are Anglo-Saxon. This interesting figure was broken to pieces by the Puritan troopers, but repaired after the Restoration by Sir Humphrey Tracy of Stanway. The coats

of arms, which are a jumble of fleurs-de-lis, spread eagles, lions rampant, and flying birds, seem to have been painted, says Mr. Fosbrooke, in the reign of Henry the Fourth, and they form a mixture of the arms of France and England.

## A SILENT WITNESS.

BY EDMUND YATES.

AUTHOR OF "BLACK SHEEP," "CASTAWAY," "THE YELLOW FLAG," &c. &c.

BOOK III. CHAPTER I. BEATEN.

HALF paralysed with horror and amazement, Heath remained for a few minutes motionless, his eyes fixed on the figure of his unwelcome visitor, his parted lips rigid and parched. The apparition of a ghost from the other world could not more completely have astonished him; indeed, at first, he had an idea that the pale and determined face on which he gazed so intently, with its sad bloodless lips, its dark eyes flashing a scornful defiance, was either more or less than mortal. He had never doubted that Anne was dead. When he first met Studley, on the captain's return from his futile search after his daughter in Paris, and learned from him of the manner of Anne's disappearance at Boulogne, Heath made up his mind that she had committed suicide by jumping from the pier; her mental power, which he remembered having noticed on one or two occasions as terribly strong, must have been weakened by the horrible scene of which she had been a witness, and the severe illness which she had subsequently undergone; and, to avoid any further misery and degradation, she had put an end to herself. The captain had not thought it worth his while to disturb this theory, more especially as he himself believed in the fact of his daughter's death. That she had not drowned herself from the Boulogne pier he knew, as he had duly received her letter written to him from Paris; but in that letter she had spoken of the burden of life being too heavy for her to bear any longer, alone and friendless as she was, and of her having taken measures for finding a place among the nameless dead. The captain had long since got rid of the uncomfortable feeling which the first perusal of these words caused him, and when a chance recollection of his daughter passed across his muddled brain, he thought of her and spoke of her to Heath as one no longer living.

She was there, though, upright, stern, and pitiless. As Heath looked at her, the whole scene enacted on that fatal Sunday at Loddonford rose before his mind. Again he saw Anne Studley looking in at the window upon the deed of blood; again he heard the long low wail which she had uttered, before falling senseless on the ground. That accursed vision had not troubled him for months, but it was full upon him now, and there was the avenger, alive and standing before him.

It was some time before he could speak; when he did, his voice was thick and husky, and he scarcely seemed to have his lips at his command.

"What—what has brought you here?" he said.

In strong contrast to his hoarse utterance were the clear and ringing tones in which Anne replied. "There is but one motive in the world that could have prompted my coming," she said, with her eyes firmly fixed upon him. "I have a friend who is my one tie to life; to save her from you I have come hither. You are incredulous, I know, as to the existence of such feelings as love and friendship, but you will be able to estimate the strength and truth of my love for this friend, by the fact that it has induced me to look upon your face again."

Heath had recovered himself a little—a very little—by this time. He knew that the figure before him was not that of a ghost, though it is doubtful whether any visitant from the tomb could have inspired in him greater dread. His usual keen perception, too, was somewhat blunted by his terror and amazement; he did not at first appreciate the stern resolution hidden under Anne's quiet manner, and it was in a bullying tone that he said, "Now that you have plucked up sufficient courage, or overcome your maidenly reserve, or whatever it may be, and looked upon my face again, perhaps you will tell me what you wish me to do."

"I have heard," said Anne, in the same calm, clear voice, "that you are about to be married to Miss Grace Middleham. Such a match would, doubtless, be very advantageous for you in every point of view, for Miss Middleham has beauty and great wealth; but much as you may be interested in her, my love for her transcends anything you can ever feel, and in the exercise of that love I have come to tell you that you must renounce her."

He was steadier now, much steadier,

and looked somewhat like his old self, as he said, with a hard scornful smile, "It is very good of you to come to the point with so much frankness. I must take exception to your estimate of the feelings I may entertain towards Miss Middleham; but as regards my interest in her you speak quite correctly. Also as regards my intention to marry her, and—my determination to carry that intention into effect."

The smile had faded away ere he came to these last words, which he spoke very deliberately, and with his eyes fixed on his companion.

"Have you counted the cost of such a proceeding, George Heath?" said Anne, dropping into a chair, leaning her arm on the desk, and confronting him. "I have been quiet for so many months that you thought me dead—as indeed I was dead to the world and all in it save one; while you, relieved of my presence, have been progressing in the world's favour, so that even now, when you find me before you, you seem unable to realise the position which we hold towards each other. It can be made plain in a very few words," she added, bending forward. "If you do not consent to give up your pretensions to Grace Middleham, I will reveal all I know. I will denounce you as a murderer!"

His face grew pale again, but the scornful smile soon returned to his lips. "Your education at Hampstead, where I first had the pleasure of seeing you," he said, "evidently did not include a study of the law, or you would have known in such cases a wife's evidence cannot be received against her husband; and I have the honour and the pleasure of claiming you as my wife."

He looked hard at her to see the effect of this home-thrust, and was surprised to find how quietly she received it.

"So be it," she said, leaning back in her chair. "If that be the case, my point is gained. If you admit me to be your wife, Grace is free, for I conclude that you do not openly propose to commit bigamy."

Heath felt that she had scored a point, and her manner irritated him almost as much as her words. "Suppose I were to defy you," he said, "and to declare that you were not my wife?"

"In that case," replied Anne, "you would throw away the shield which you have just raised for your protection. I

should tender my evidence, and it would be received."

Her coolness provoked him beyond endurance. "Curse you!" he said, bringing his hand heavily down upon the table; "you may do your worst. I will throw over the whole question of wife or no wife: I will say you are a crazy jade whom no one knows; and when you accuse me of having made away with Walter Danby—and you will be asked for evidence, which you will find remarkably difficult to supply—what trace has ever been found of the body? There is no proof that he ever came to that infernal place. A man's life is not sworn away so easily as you imagine."

"That a man's life can be taken away easily enough, I have had horrible proof," said Anne, shuddering. "Walter Danby's body is hidden somewhere at Loddonford, and you know it!"

She looked fixedly at him as she spoke; but he had regained his usual self-possession by this time, and did not betray the smallest sign of surprise.

"I know nothing of the kind," he said; adding, with an ironical bow, "To me your assertion is, of course, sufficient; but, in a court of justice, you would have to make it good."

For a moment, Anne was a little disconcerted by the perfect coolness of Heath's demeanour.

"I have, fortunately, a choice of charges to prefer against you," she said, after a pause. "Suppose I were to accuse you of the great robbery committed in this very bank! Remember, I saw the gold and the jewels!"

"May I ask you where you saw them?" said Heath, bending forward. "I will refresh your memory; in your father's house at Loddonford."

"That is true," said Anne; "but that would not hinder me from speaking. I know not whether my father is alive or dead; but, compared to Grace Middleham, he is nothing to me. To see that her future is not wrecked is my determination; and, to save her, I will tell all I know. Yes, all! concealing nothing, sparing none!"

As she emphasised this sentence, with outstretched fore-finger, Heath recoiled in amazement before her. This girl, whom he had rated so cheaply, had the best of him then. He was astounded at her audacity, more astounded at the firmness with which she held to the course



she had indicated. With rage and mortification at his heart, he acknowledged to himself that the edifice which he had built up with so much trouble, during several months, had crumbled into dust at this woman's touch. He was beaten on every point. The mere revelation of his previous marriage would ruin him with Grace. He was beaten; and he must own it, making the best bargain possible with the winner of the game. He rose from his chair, strode to the fireplace, and stood there with his hands plunged into his pockets.

After a short, internal struggle, during which he had recovered the mastery over himself, he said, in his usual tone—

"A man of sense gives up fighting when he sees no further chance of success. You insist that I should give up this intended marriage with Miss Middleham, and you threaten me with certain consequences, if I refuse. Those threats are too strong for me, and I therefore submit; but, at the same time, I give you this warning—that if you reveal more than is absolutely necessary for the prevention of the marriage, you will bring absolute ruin upon your father, who is now a hopelessly-degraded drunkard and panper, and condemn him either to prison with me, or to starvation without me. You would not care about either of these alternatives, I suppose, although you have acknowledged that your filial feelings are not very strong?"

"My filial feelings are what my father made them," said Anne, quietly; "but there is no need, I imagine, that we should discuss them here. My object will be met by your renouncing Miss Middleham, by your telling her that you are not free to fulfil the marriage contract into which you have entered, and by your relinquishing all claims upon her hand."

"I agree to that," he said. "I have already confessed that you are too strong for me, and that I can make no further fight."

"I shall want you to write a letter to that effect," said Anne; "that I may take with me."

"A letter?" he repeated. "Why can I not tell Miss Middleham when I see her?"

"Because it is not my intention that you should see her for a long time, if ever again. You must write a letter in the sense which I have pointed out, which I can give to her."

He shrugged his shoulders, saying, "As

you will," and returning to the desk, sat down, and at once commenced to write. Anne, who at the same moment pushed away her chair, noticed that his hand was firm, and his writing, as usual, scrupulously neat and steady. "I suppose that will do?" he said, handing her the letter when he had finished it. "I have told her that it is impossible for me to fulfil the engagement, without saying why, and I have left any further explanation for you to make, consistent, of course, with the terms of our bargain."

"The letter will do perfectly well," said Anne, placing it in her pocket, "and the terms of the bargain shall be duly kept. And now," rising from her chair, "our interview is at an end."

"Not just yet," said Heath; "give me a few minutes more, if you please. You have had your own way entirely, and now I have a few words to say."

"Say on," she remarked, with a gesture of impatience.

"I want to know," he said, looking up at her with something like admiration, as she stood there, drawn to her full height, cold, proud, and stately, "I want to know what you are going to do with yourself now?"

"Why can you possibly desire to know?" she asked, in surprise. "What possible right have you to ask?"

"I desire to know," he said, lazily, still regarding her with that strange look, "because I have conceived a very great interest in you; because I am amazed in discovering you to be as you are. Our previous acquaintance was so slight, that I had neither time nor opportunity to learn to appreciate your real character, or the strength of mind which distinguishes you from most of your sex; and I dare to ask—that was, I think, the other way in which you put the question—by virtue of my rights as your husband."

"Are you going to urge that plea?" she asked, with supreme contempt.

"I think I am," Heath replied. "With your talent and courage—you see I speak very frankly—you might be useful to me in many ways, and I do not see why I should permit you to enjoy that freedom of action of which you have just deprived me."

"You uttered a very neat axiom just now," said Anne, "about giving up when you saw no further chance of success; but you have apparently not learned that it is as bad, if not worse, to threaten penalties

without the power of inflicting them. I will apply to you the phrase which you used to me at the beginning of this interview—I defy you to do what you threaten. I warn you that if you attempt to see Miss Middleham, I will at once take steps for denouncing you to justice; and as to your claim on my wifely obedience, I tell you plainly, that when I have gone out of that door you shall never hear of me again, unless it should concern her welfare—the welfare of the only human being I love—that I should once more interpose in her affairs.”

She turned on her heels as she spoke, and without looking at him again, passed out of the office, and mingling with the crowd of customers at the bank counter, was lost to his view.

The next instant Mr. Heath seized the speaking pipe, and summoned Hollebone to his presence. “Quick as you can,” he said, when the little man once more stood before him. “A lady, rather tall, dressed in black, with a double veil, noticeable for its thickness, over her face, has just left this office. She has scarcely yet gained the street; follow her, and let me know where she goes.”

“And I thought that girl a fool,” said Heath, when he was alone again, “and eagerly agreed to her father taking her off after the marriage, and was delighted at the idea of her death. What idiotic short-sightedness! Properly trained, she would have been worth anything—a powerful ally, instead of, as now, a determined enemy. One would have to have lived down her horror at all she had seen, but that would not have been difficult; women far more sensitive than I should judge her to be, have given up all such nonsense when their friends have been interested, and their passions roused. What a chance that wretched Studley threw away! In his case there would have been none of that horror to fight against; and with such a trump card as that in his hand he might have held his own against all comers, instead of being the wandering drunken mendicant that he is. It is a great comfort, however,” he muttered, settling himself at the desk, “that I have hitherto been enabled to induce Studley to confine his wanderings to the Continent. I had quite enough on my hands before, and now I have to frame a plausible excuse for withdrawing from this marriage, on which, as everyone knew, my heart was set. There was no other

way, however, that I could see, to avoid instant exposure; and if Anne Studley only gives me a little time before she produces that letter, though I shall have missed the heiress, I may yet be able to hold my ground here, and in two or three other more important quarters. Now to business again,” he said, ringing the bell. Then to the porter who appeared, “Send Mr. Towser to me.”

The faculty which had been so valuable to him all his life—of being able to lay aside for the time any matter, of whatever gravity or importance, which might be troubling him—remained with him still, and in a few minutes he was so immersed in going over calculations and statistics with his chief clerk, as to be temporarily oblivious of Anne Studley’s existence.

Meanwhile, Anne, whose nerves, notwithstanding her apparent outward calmness of demeanour, had been stretched to the utmost point of tension during the interview in the bank parlour, felt the almost inevitable reaction immediately on reaching the street, and was glad to hail a passing cab; once seated in which her fortitude gave way, and she burst into a flood of tears. She had been victorious, though—she had that great consolation for all she had undergone; she had achieved what she had undertaken—the object of her mission was accomplished; and she was then on her way to Grace’s house, in possession of the letter which would bring about Grace’s release from her certain degradation and ruin. It was no part, however, of Anne Studley’s plan that Grace should be too soon made acquainted with the nature of the imminent peril with which she had been threatened, or the means which had been adopted for her deliverance. A patient and deep-searching student of character, Anne, during the year of their residence in the professor’s house, had noted the change in her friend’s temperament. Not that Grace Middleham was less affectionate to the companion of her school-days, for nothing could exceed the warmth and the regard which she took every opportunity of evincing; but, as her character became more formed, she had lost that habit of depending for everything upon Anne’s aid and counsel, had become considerably self-reliant, and not a little self-willed. These qualities, Anne rightly judged, would have increased, rather than lessened, since Grace had been fully recognised as the heiress of her uncle’s fortune, and had been made an

object of general adulation; and it was therefore possible that, in the first moments of indignation at hearing what Anne had done, she would refuse to believe anything against her lover, and would insist on his returning to her. That Grace Middleham had entirely succumbed to Heath's influence and fascinations Anne knew too well, and that her anger against those who interfered between them would be proportionate to her passion for him she fully believed. It was above all things, therefore, desirable that Grace should be approached quietly, and, if possible, persuaded to return to Germany with Anne before the revelation was made; in order that, being at a distance, she would be deprived of the chance of taking, in the first outburst of her wrath, any positive steps of which she might be induced, in her calmer judgment, to disapprove and wish to revoke.

On arrival at the house in Eaton-place, Anne, who, during the drive, had managed to regain her composure, again felt the effects of the hard trial which her nerves had undergone in the earlier portion of the day. But she recovered herself sufficiently to impress the tall footman, who answered her ring, and to whom she gave the name of Mrs. Waller, with the sense of her dignity, and, consequently, to make him show her into the dining-room and announce her promptly, instead of leaving her in the hall to take her chance of the time at which the message, that "A young pusson was waiting," might arrive upstairs. Grace happened to be alone when the announcement was made; and as it was a long time since she had heard Anne's pseudonym, and her mind had been so much occupied with other things, she at first failed to understand who wished to see her; but, the truth coming to her after a moment's reflection, she rushed past the astonished footman, hurried down the stairs, and, the next moment, had seized Anne in her arms and covered her with kisses.

"My sweetest Anne," she said, "you are the very last person I should have thought of seeing here. Fancy your making your appearance in London after all your protestations that nothing earthly should induce you to come, and your refusal of the invitation which I sent you regularly for the first few weeks after my arrival!"

"I should not be here now, dear," said Anne, returning her friend's caresses, "if

the occasion were not a most important one."

"I know what it is," said Grace, suddenly drawing back. "You have received my letter, announcing my engagement with George—with Mr. Heath, I mean; and you have come to have a talk with me about it—a serious talk, I dare say, too——"

"I have come on a serious matter, but not that," said Anne, quietly; "and, unfortunately, I am the bearer of ill news. It will, doubtless, be distasteful to you, in the midst of all your triumphs and successes, to hear of pain and sickness; but the fact is, that Madame Sturm is very ill—much worse than I have hitherto let you know."

"Poor dear Frau Professorin!" said Grace. "How very sad; I am quite sorry for her."

"She talks constantly of you," said Anne, on whom Grace's society-tone jarred unpleasantly, "and frequently expresses her most earnest wish to see you."

"How unfortunate that her illness should have happened just at this time, when I am away," said Grace.

"Latterly, she has been so urgent in the expression of this wish, that I have not known what to say to her; and, finally, I could refuse her prayers no longer, but set off, in the hope that I might persuade you to return with me to Germany."

"My dear Anne," said Grace, "that would be perfectly impossible."

"Would it?" said Anne. "I fail to see that. You are your own mistress, are you not—you are dependent on no one's will or wish?"

"No; of course, I am mistress of my own actions. There is no one whom I am absolutely obliged to consult," said Grace; "but, still, people would think it so odd, my going away at a moment's notice."

"What people?" asked Anne.

"Well, Mrs. Crutchley, for instance," replied Grace.

"Would it matter to you what Mrs. Crutchley thought?" asked Anne. "She is, is she not, a very temporary acquisition—hired, like your house, horses, servants, &c., for the season, and then to be got rid of and never seen again? This old woman dying over there speaks of you as the only blood-relation now left to her; and implores you to come to her, that she may look upon your face before she dies."

"I am the nearest relation left to her, I

know," said Grace, softening; "and if I thought that I could do her any good——"

"Nothing can do her any good, Grace," said Anne; "but it would be a satisfaction to her to take farewell of you; and to you, after she is gone, to know that you made her last hours happy at a very small sacrifice to yourself."

"You are quite right, dear," said Grace, after a little pause. "It is my duty to go, and I will do it; she was kind to me, poor old lady, in her odd way, and I will not appear ungrateful. I need only stop a few days, and I am sure George will not object when he knows the reason of my absence."

"You will come then with me by the mail-train, to-night," said Anne. "You will have no occasion to take a maid. I am Mrs. Waller, you know, and can do everything you want."

"To-night is rather sudden, Anne, is it not?" said Grace. "I should like to have seen Mr. Heath."

"Every hour is of consequence," said Anne, firmly. "Your aunt only lingers on from day to day, and you would not easily forgive yourself if you arrived too late."

"Very well," said Grace, "I will go with you to-night."

But when this arrangement was communicated to Mrs. Crutchley, that worthy lady was highly exasperated, and did her utmost to prevent its being carried out. Though the season was considerably on the wane, there were balls to be gone to and engagements to be fulfilled. It was impossible that Miss Middleham should give up society, and tear herself away from her friends, for such a very inadequate reason as the illness of an old aunt; and when these various reasons had been successfully combated, Mrs. Crutchley fell back upon what was really the mainspring of all her motives. She perfectly recognised in the Mrs. Waller, whose sudden and unexpected arrival had such influence over Miss Middleham's movements, the mysterious correspondent to whom Grace had addressed such frequent and such lengthy epistles; she thought there was something particularly suspicious, though what, she was not able to discover in these circumstances; and, beaten on every point, she urged most strongly that Grace should

not leave London without seeing Mr. Heath. Of course, Grace was anxious for any opportunity of seeing her lover, and as Anne made no objection, messengers were despatched in search of Mr. Heath, both at the bank and at his private chambers, and letters were written requesting him to come to Eaton-place at once. But Mrs. Crutchley was given to understand that in no case would Miss Middleham's departure be postponed, and orders were given that the necessary packing should be proceeded with.

Time passes on, and the large footman announces that both the messengers have returned from unsuccessful searches. Mr. Heath was not to be found at the bank or at his chambers, and at neither place was it known whither he had gone; but the letters had been left for him, and Mrs. Crutchley, looking at her watch, declares that there is yet an hour before Grace starts, and opines that by that time he will arrive. The hour wanes, and Grace, after many caresses from Mrs. Crutchley (who is loud in her lamentations at the non-engagement of a courier), takes her seat by Mrs. Waller in the brougham, and is whirled away to Charing-cross, where the tall footman takes their tickets, looks at their luggage, and bestows on them a final benediction by lifting his hat as the train glides out of the station.

Mr. Heath, too, has witnessed their departure from behind the shelter of some luggage barrows, piled on end; and his feelings towards one of the travellers, at least, are of anything but a benedictory nature. "You have succeeded, curse you!" he mutters to himself, as he moves out of the station. "You are carrying her away from me, and in a day or two you will tell her—— I beg your pardon!"

The man against whom he has stumbled is shabbily dressed, with a slouch hat, and clothes of foreign cut, covered with worn and shining braid. He starts at the sound of Heath's voice, and steps aside that he may get him more fully in the gaslight; then approaches him again, so closely, that Heath feels his hot thick breath upon his face, as he asks him in jeering tones, "Who is it you would like to murder next?"